

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE
SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
12 MARCH 2014



**NEWCASTLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2012-17:
DRAFT YEAR THREE ACTION PLAN AND YEAR TWO REVIEW**

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Introduction

This report is made in order to provide Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to comment on the Economic Development Strategy Draft Year Three Action Plan in advance of its consideration by Cabinet.

Background

In May 2012, the Borough Council approved a five year Economic Development Strategy (2012-2017) in order to focus its efforts for stimulating growth and bringing jobs to the Borough (both directly and through working with partners). An annual action plan is also provided each year to show what actions are being taken to take this forward. These actions are grouped under the following four broad headings:

- Promoting enterprise and supporting local businesses to grow,
- Improving the skills of the local workforce
- Marketing and development, and
- Strengthening the vitality and appeal of the town centres.

Appended to this report is the draft Year Three Action Plan (2014-15), which also contains a summary of progress made in Year Two (2013-14). This is due to be reported to Cabinet (at its meeting on April 2nd, or the following meeting if necessary), together with any comments made on the Plan by Scrutiny Committee.

Questions to be addressed

The Action Plan proposes action in four main priority areas (see above); members of the Committee are asked to comment on the actions proposed and to consider what other actions might be undertaken (by the Council or by its partners) in the context of these objectives.

Outcomes

That members of Scrutiny Committee consider the content of the Year Three Action Plan and identify any additions or modifications they wish to see made by conveying these to Cabinet.

Supporting information

Please refer to the Appendix to this report which contains the Draft Plan.

Constraints

The constraints on the Borough Council's efforts to stimulate the economic regeneration of the Borough are largely resources (both financial and staff), the strength of (and wider trends in) the national and local economy, and the influence which the Council is able to bring to bear on its partners to work together to deliver joint objectives.

Conclusions

The Year Three Action Plan will be reported to Cabinet on April 2nd or the following meeting if necessary. Prior consideration by this Scrutiny Committee allows members of this Committee to convey comments on the Plan and support for The Plan in advance of Cabinet consideration and allow these to be taken into account as part of the Cabinet decision making process..

Relevant Portfolio Holder

Councillor Terry Turner, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration, Business and Town Centres.

Background Materials

Corporate Policy: The Economic Development Strategy 2012-17, from which this Action Plan takes its lead, has been developed in the context of the Borough Council's Vision and Values and of its priority to be 'A Borough of Opportunity'.

Appendices

The draft version of the Year Three Action Plan, on which comments from Members are sought, is appended to this report. Commentary is also made on progress made in this current year (Year Two).